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ABSTRACT

This booklet sets forth the responsibilities and challenges facing Illinois school board members. As the first section on general responsibilities shows, the school board takes action only as a body and speaks only through the written record of its meetings. Individual members lack the authority to commit the school board to a particular action, expenditure, or policy, and must perform their community leadership role in a manner consistent with the law and with procedures agreed upon by the full board. Members must also adhere to the Illinois Association of School Boards Code of Conduct. Section 2 explains the structure of Illinois school government, and section 3 discusses the local school board structure, board officials' responsibilities, and the kinds and purposes of various meetings. Section 4 outlines the board's powers and duties. Section 5 provides a sample agenda and explains meeting rules and conduct. Section 6 discusses educational finance, including funding sources and accounting procedures. Section 7 discusses board duties regarding collective bargaining and labor relations issues. Members are particularly advised not to confuse labor relations with human relations. Appendices provide tips on communicating and dealing with conflict, procedural policies and plans to increase meeting effectiveness, resources for further reading, and a statement of principles and procedures for effective cooperation between a board member and the chief administrator. (MLH)

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The Effective School Board Member

An introduction to the work of boards of education in Illinois

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IASB
Illinois Association of School Boards

The Effective School Board Member

An introduction to the work of boards of education in Illinois

By WILLIAM G. ALBERTS
in collaboration with
the Staff of the
ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

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Welcome to the School Board

Like high school graduation, election to a school board is not so much the end of something as it is a beginning. Both the graduate and the board member can take pride in their achievement—but more importantly, they must be prepared for the real-life challenges to come.

Preparing board members for their special challenges is a major function of the Illinois Association of School Boards. Recognizing that the newly-elected board member wants to quickly acquire an understanding of what the job is all about, IASB offers a combination of publications and workshops. *The Effective School Board Member* is a first step. It provides an introduction to school board work with enough information—we hope—to get the board member started on the right foot.

School board members provide an invaluable service to their communities and the state of Illinois. Unfortunately, it is a service that isn't always easily performed. Laws and local pressures make for complex decisions.

If you approach those decisions with a strong desire to learn all you can, you will find this handbook a helpful springboard and your Association a ready ally in the future.

Congratulations, and welcome aboard.

Harold P. Seamon
Executive Director
Illinois Association of School Boards

March, 1989

About this Book

The Effective School Board Member represents the work of several people, beginning with a study of what new school board members seem to need and ending with a careful review and editing of the final manuscript. IASB is most notably grateful to William G. Alberts who, following his retirement from school administration in 1980, agreed to serve as senior author of this new booklet. Bill Alberts had a long and distinguished career in the administration of Illinois schools, capped with 17 years as superintendent of schools in Quincy Unit District 172.

Bill Alberts worked closely with the staff of IASB and obtained the views of many school board members and superintendents in drafting the initial manuscript for *The Effective School Board Member*. This final product is an accurate review of the general standards of performance endorsed by most experienced school board members and the IASB staff.

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I. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

> A fundamental goal of the People of the State is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capabilities.
>
> The State shall provide for an efficient system of high quality public education and services. Education in public schools through the secondary level shall be free.
>
> *Constitution of the State of Illinois*
> (Article X, Section 1)

As a member of a board of education, you now share with your colleagues an obligation to carry out this constitutional mandate at the local level. You are both morally and legally responsible to guarantee to all—each and every individual—free, quality public education that will permit them to develop to the limits of their capabilites.

This is an awesome mission you have assumed as a member of your board of education—a mission requiring your total commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for all. Your actions will directly affect the lives of nearly everyone living in your school district.

Public education is the responsibility of the state but in Illinois the state has delegated much of this responsibility to your school board, which provides local citizen control of your schools. To a large extent, your community can have whatever type and quality of educational programs and services it desires. This privilege of self determination will continue for so long as local board members have the vision and courage to fully discharge their responsibilities. If local boards fail to meet their obligations, local citizen control of the schools will give way and public education will be dominated by the state and federal agencies, the courts, and organized groups with vested interests.

You as a Member

There is no greater honor for a person of high purpose than to be selected by one's community to help guide the education of its youth. Your performance as a board member must always be measured against the responsibilities assigned to you by law, given to you by your peers as they elected you, and accepted by you as you assumed the role of a board member.

While the board must act as a corporate body, each member assumes considerable personal responsibility for his or her own performance as a board member. Effective board members have a number of characteristics in common that may serve as standards for all to pursue. The following list of characteristics is not all inclusive, but it is

"So how does it feel being the only responsive member of the school board who interacts with the citizenry?"

safe to say that a good school board member:

- genuinely believes in the public school system;
- approaches responsibility with an open mind, seeks the truth, and makes decisions without bias or prejudice;
- recognizes that he or she is a public official charged with a grave and important responsibility;
- is interested in the well-being of the entire community;
- realizes that a good school system can only be developed through cooperation and teamwork;
- represents the district as a whole and not any particular segment;
- is willing to learn, has the ability to withstand criticism, and is loyal to associates;
- abides by and supports the decisions made by the board;
- recognizes that his responsibility is not to run the public schools, but to see that they are well run;
- seeks knowledge of the problems and needs of public education and is alert to changing trends in education;
- keeps informed, is punctual at all board meetings, is courteous and is willing to discuss board policies with all interested groups;
- considers all questions that arise on the basis of what is best for the youth and adults in the district.

The effective board member refers citizen complaints and inquiries to appropriate staff members.

You and the Job

You, of course, are only one of the members of the board of education, but you are one and one is important. Pull your weight. Don't dominate or be dominated. Your vote counts whether it be with the majority or against it. Act as an informed, responsible citizen and you will make a contribution to the future of your community, state and nation.

One of the most important concepts a new board member must learn is that the school board takes action only as a body and speaks only through the written record (minutes) of its meetings. Thus, the individual member has no legal powers or authority. That is, the individual member cannot commit the school district to a particular action, expenditure, or policy without a majority vote of the full board. The individual member has both a legal and moral responsibility not to assume, or appear to assume, those tasks for which the district has employed professional staff. The effective board member, for example, refers citizen complaints and inquiries to staff members who are closest to the source of the complaint or who have the necessary information.

Although an effective board member must take a community leadership role in behalf of public education, the member must perform this role in a manner consistent with the law and procedures agreed upon by the full board. The vital individual and team relationship of school board members and the staff can be damaged by misuses of power by individual board members. A board member who attempts—without authorization—to speak for the total board, direct members of the staff, or make other individual decisions is acting beyond his authority and outside the law.

A Code of Conduct for School Board Members

The Code of Conduct for school board members adopted by the Board of Directors of the Illinois Association of School Boards serves very well as a constant reminder of board member responsibilities. This code—reproduced on page 6—is used by some boards as a swearing in ceremony for new board members and is found in the board policies of some districts.

Code of Conduct
for members of school boards

As a member of my local board of education, I shall do my utmost to represent the public interest in education by adhering to the following commitments:

1. I shall represent all school district constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to special interest or partisan political groups.
2. I shall avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety which could result from my position, and shall not use my board membership for personal gain or publicity.
3. I shall recognize that a board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting.
4. I shall take no private action that might compromise the board or administration and shall respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
5. I shall abide by majority decisions of the board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
6. I shall encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow board members and others who seek a hearing before the board.
7. I shall be involved and knowledgeable about not only local educational concerns, but also about state and national issues.

In addition, I shall encourage my board of education to pursue the following goals:

1. The development of educational programs which meet the individual needs of every student, regardless of ability, race, sex, creed, or social standing.
2. The development of procedures for the regular and systematic evaluation of programs, staff performance, and board operations to ensure progress toward educational and fiscal goals.
3. The development of effective school board policies which provide direction for the operation of the schools and delegate authority to the superintendent for their administration.
4. The development of systematic communications which ensure that the school board, administration, staff, students, and community are fully informed and that the staff understands the community's aspirations for its schools.
5. The development of sound business practices which ensure that every dollar spent produces maximum benefits.

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2. ILLINOIS SCHOOL GOVERNMENT— THE STRUCTURE

Education is a State Function

Public education is the responsibility of the State. Each of the 50 states, through its state constitution, has required that the state legislature provide for a free system of public schools. The Illinois Constitution of 1970 states that, "The state shall provide for an efficient system of high quality public education and services." The constitution also requires that there shall be a State Board of Education but leaves it up to the General Assembly to determine the nature of the State Board and to establish its powers.

To carry out this constitutional mandate, the Illinois General Assembly has enacted a body of laws known as *The Illinois School Code.** This legislation prescribes how public education shall operate in Illinois and what shall take place in the public schools. The courts have held that the General Assembly has absolute power over education, subject only to limits established by the federal and state constitutions.

It is impractical, of course, for the General Assembly to administer the day-to-day operations of the public schools or to formulate policy for each local district. The General Assembly instead created local school boards. Thus, the school board is an agency of the state that is delegated much of the state's sovereign power with respect to public education. However, the local school board is subject to regulation both by laws enacted by the legislature and by the policies and rules of the State Board of Education.

Obviously, local school boards must be aware of pending legislation and communicate to their legislative representatives their opinions on the impact of proposed legislation. It is vital to public education that a regular exchange of information take place.

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education is responsible for setting educational policies and guidelines for elementary, secondary and vocational schools in Illinois. The Board is composed of 17 lay citizens appointed on a regional basis by the Governor with the consent of the State Senate. The Board appoints a State Superintendent of Education to serve as chief state educational officer and administer the state education agency.

The State Board of Education provides educational leadership for school districts; insures that schools meet minimum standards for educational programs, personnel, and business management practices; provides schools with expert help in curriculum and management; disburses state and federal funds to school districts; and administers a policy of equal educational opportunity for all school children. The Board also analyzes the aims and needs of education and recommends legislation to the General Assembly.

Educational Service Region

An intermediate layer of authority and responsibility consists of the Superintendents of Educational Service Regions, who are elected officials and part of the administrative structure of the state. ESR superintendents assist in coordinating programs, keep records, interpret state laws and regulations for local districts, and assist in providing services that local districts find difficult to establish.

The Federal Government

While the federal government does not have direct responsibility for governing the public schools, the influence of the U.S. Congress and executive agencies, such as the Department of Education, is substantial. Education is an integral part of our national policy. The U.S. Congress directly affects public education through funding of special programs. Additionally, the rules, regulations, and guidelines of federal agencies have a direct effect on school district operations.

*Chapter 122 of *The Illinois Revised Statutes.*

The Courts

Recent years have seen increasing influence on the public schools by our judicial system. The *U.S. Constitution* is directly applicable to many of the legal actions involving school districts. U.S. Supreme Court decisions affect school districts on issues ranging from desegregation to maternity leave policies.

The Illinois Supreme Court, the state appellate courts, and the circuit courts deal with many issues affecting school district operations. These decisions are important to those charged with governing Illinois' public schools.

The Local School Board

The local school board is an agency of the state and is delegated authority to govern the school district. The board is legally responsible to the state for school district operations (and politically responsible to local voters). However, the school board's authority over the district is limited in many respects by state and federal laws.

A school board is best able to meet its responsibilities when it:

- adopts goals and policies that reflect community needs and state requirements;
- ensures that the superintendent and staff understand such goals and policies and how to pursue them;
- monitors district performance to see that results are consistent with the goals and policies.

School boards are responsible for providing the financial and human resources necessary for the goals they want to pursue. This responsibility also means ensuring the wise use of those resources.

Legitimate questions for a school board to ask are: Is our school system "thorough and efficient?" Are our schools "free?" Are we concerned with the education of "all" children?

The local school boards is the legal body through which the will and aspirations of the people are translated into an educational program at the local level. Upon the local board rests responsibility for the local school system. This is basic to the fundamental principle of American public school education. There resides with the local school board, by the very nature of its obligations and responsibilities, the necessary legal authority to act for the people it represents on behalf of the children in its schools.

Understanding community needs

The school board must have a thorough understanding of the character and educational needs of its community as another basis for making planning decisions and setting objectives. Here again the board relies heavily on the analytical skills of the management staff. However, the board may well feel itself representative of the community in a way that no professional can be.

A board member's personal contacts with citizens give a definite mind-set on the character, desires, and needs of the public. However, board members must recognize that every community is made up of many publics, and that no individual can know first-hand the needs and desires of them all. Personal viewpoints and interests must be melded into an interpretation of community needs as a whole if the district is to serve the total community and not just cater to the needs of a few. Individual interpretations and trade-offs are by no means easy. The board member's job involves compromise between alternative programs and interests.

A more direct and scientific approach is for boards to survey the attitudes and interests of the community. The survey technique is used more and more as school boards seek to learn more accurately the attitudes and desires of their communities, levels of satisfaction with present programs, and desires for change or improvement. Districts that apply market research and survey techniques find that the communication established is extremely helpful in planning district objectives. They also find that citizens are apt to be more sympathetic with results if they can be shown that their own assessment of needs was taken into account. The satisfaction of consumers is a fundamental part of appraising the performance of schools.

Perhaps less subtle than the identification of educational needs, but no less important, is an understanding of the financial resources of the community and its attitudes toward school spending. It is ultimately the board's responsibility, not that of the management team, to determine how much the community can afford to spend and how much it is willing to spend for the various educational programs that can be made available.

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3. THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD STRUCTURE

The Board

Illinois contains different types of school districts (community unit, elementary, high school, consolidated, and charter to name a few). With few exceptions, governing school boards consist of seven members elected to serve terms of four years. Illinois school board elections are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each odd-numbered year. Staggered terms of members are structured so that three or four seats are contested at each biennial election.

In most school districts, board members run at large. This means members can live anywhere within the district and a voter can cast his ballot for any candidate(s).

Vacancies caused by death or resignation are filled by appointment by the board until the next election.

Although school boards are authorized to exercise discretionary powers in many ways, they represent the state and have only those powers that might reasonably be inferred. (See Chapter 4 for a look at "duties and powers.") The dual function of the school board can be stated this way:

1) to carry out the educational policies of the state;

2) to pursue the educational aspirations of the community.

Only as a Board

The rule is well established that when school boards are authorized to perform acts involving judgment and discretion, they may act only as a corporate body at a lawful meeting. It is essential, therefore, that school board members know such matters as:

- Is the proposed action one the board is authorized to take?
- Is the action being taken at a meeting that meets requirements of the Illinois Open Meetings Act?
- Is the action being taken in accordance with proper procedure—such as a motion or resolution and a vote entered in the record—or are there any unusual considerations—such as public notice, public hearing, or special voting requirements?

Individual members of the board may not act alone or make decisions binding upon the board or district. Nor should board members participate in secret or "star chamber" meetings. Not only do such meetings destroy the mutual confidence which must exist among board members and the administration, but such meetings deny the most basic premise of school board operation—that of arriving at sound decisions following discussion by all members either in public meetings or at legally convened executive sessions.

Effective operation of any large business requires that the board of directors act through its chief executive officer. The superintendent of schools, as the chief executive officer, should normally speak and act for the board. Individual members of the board should never "bypass" the superintendent in speaking for the board unless authorized to do so by official board action.

Only the board of education's elected officers have duties or responsibilities as individual members. Such duties and responsibilities are limited by *The School Code* and usually by policies of each local board. Other than these designated special responsibilities, the officers of the board are considered as regular members of the board.

Officers of the Board

Each board of education must elect its own president, vice president and secretary (or clerk, in board of director districts). These officers are elected to serve for terms of one year or two years at the

board's option.

Also, in all counties other than Cook, the board must name someone to serve as school treasurer. In Cook County, school districts are served by township school treasurers.

The president and vice president of the board of education must be members of the board and elected by the board members. The secretary may be a member of the board but need not be.

Differing practices exist with respect to the board secretary. In some districts, a board member is elected secretary, but is provided with staff assistance in carrying out the very important duties of the secretary and freeing the board member to participate fully in the deliberations of the board. Some boards employ a staff member or other person as secretary.

Whatever the plan adopted by the board to fill the secretary's position, such a plan should be described in an official board policy and must assure complete and accurate records and minutes of board meetings.

The officers of the board of education are elected at the organizational meeting of the board of education following each biennial election in November—or annually if the board opts for one-year terms for officers. It is advisable to provide for adequate legal counsel or services at this meeting. The attorney is not considered an officer of the board, but is often invaluable in conducting school business. The role of the attorney should be described in school board policy.

Role of the Board President

The president of the board of education presides at all meetings of the board of education and performs all duties incident to the office as may be imposed by law or by the board. The president is frequently required to sign official documents on behalf of the board. The president usually serves as a member of all board committees and should participate fully in the deliberative process and vote on all issues before the board.

The presidency of the board is very important. The president should be a leader and one who can draw the board together to act as a unit. However, like all other board members, the president must subordinate self interest and personality differences if the board is to act effectively and responsibly.

The major functions of the board president can be summarized as follows:

1) Preside effectively at all meetings to assure that such meetings start promptly, keep moving in a positive direction, and permit each board member the opportunity to participate fully.

2) Conduct all meetings in accordance with the procedures adopted by the board as stated in the board policies.

3) Officially act or sign, along with the secretary or treasurer or other authorized officers or board members, on behalf of the school district all contracts, orders, or agreements approved by the board.

4) Call special meetings of the board.

Other specific duties may be assigned to the president by the board through its policies.

In general, the president's duties are limited to those prescribed by law and by board policy. It is not the president's duty, for example, to act as an administrative representative of the board in conducting day-to-day operations of the school.

Good communication and trust between the president, board members, and superintendent are essential for the successful operation of the school district.

The vice president's primary function, by law, is to perform the duties of the president if there is a vacancy in that office or if the president is absent or unable to act. The school board may adopt rules imposing other duties upon the vice president.

Role of the Board Secretary

The secretary may be a member of the school board or a non-member. The secretary may receive compensation, but the board must set the amount before electing someone to the post.

If a board member is elected secretary, it is usually advisable for someone else to actually record the minutes of the meetings.

The secretary performs all duties usually pertaining to the office and such others as are imposed by law or by the board.

The secretary keeps full and accurate records of the proceedings of the board; has general supervision of such books of record and accounting as are required by law or ordered by the board of education; signs all official records of the board; sends notice of all regular and special meetings of the board; has custody of all official documents and correspondence of the board, and certifies candidates and public policy issues to the election authority.

Note that records under the secretary's supervision are kept at the school board office (usually the district's central administrative office). Most school board records must be available for public inspection.

The secretary should be present at all board meetings. In the absence of the secretary, the board must appoint a temporary secretary to be responsible for the duties of the secretary.

Role of the Treasurer

In all counties other than Cook, the school board

The treasurer receives all moneys belonging to the district, pays the same out only upon the order of the school board, and keeps an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures of the board.

may elect one of its members to serve as treasurer or appoint someone who is not a member. The majority of boards appoint a non-member as treasurer, who receives compensation set by the board. If the treasurer is a member of the board, he may not receive compensation.

A treasurer who is not a member of the board must be at least 21 years old and of proved integrity. School treasurers appointed for the first time after October 1, 1977, must have a financial background or related experience or twelve semester hours of credit in college level accounting. The treasurer must be bonded in the amount of all bonds, notes, mortgages, monies, and effects of which the treasurer is to have custody.

In general terms, the treasurer receives all moneys belonging to the district, pays the same out only upon the order of the school board, and keeps an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures of the board. The treasurer also reconciles the balance in each fund (i.e., education, transportation, building) with the school district at least once a month.

"The Handbook for School Treasurers," published by the Illinois State Board of Education, sets forth in some detail the duties and responsibilities of the board treasurer relating to financial records, bonds, orders, distribution of taxes, interfund loans, interest, tax anticipation warrants, investments, depositories, monthly reports to the board of education, and the annual audit by school district auditors.

Role of the Superintendent of Schools

The superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer of the board of education and is responsible to the board for managing the school district. School boards typically perform their executive functions by adopting policies that delegate those

functions to a superintendent who serves under a contract with the board. The superintendent also typically functions as an adviser to the school board. In order to function effectively in these two roles—manager and adviser—the superintendent should be an *ex officio* member of all board committees and should be present or represented at all meetings of the board and its committees.

In the role of chief executive, the superintendent is expected to contribute to the board's deliberations by furnishing reports, information, and recommendations for action. The chief executive keeps the board thoroughly informed about all the conditions of the district, problems ahead, and alternative courses of action to deal with the problems.

In summary, a partial list of the superintendent's duties and functions as the board's chief executive are to:

1) Attend all meetings of the board of education and serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees of the board

2) Advise the board of education and make recommendations to the board for the educational advancement and operation of the school system. The superintendent is responsible for providing information the board needs in developing policies to govern the schools.

3) Prepare the administrative rules and regulations as may be required to implement board policies. The superintendent is responsible for instructing the school staff concerning all policies, rules and regulations approved by the board and for supervising and evaluating the staff in carrying out the philosophy, objectives and policies of the board.

4) Direct the preparation of the annual budget for its adoption by the board of education and administer the budget as enacted by the board.

5) Recruit and recommend all candidates for employment by the board of education; assign or transfer employees as needed and make recommendations to the board regarding all promotions or dismissals.

6) Maintain a curriculum, special programs, activities and services that offer a complete system of education, instruction and care for all pupils attending the schools.

7) Represent the schools before the public and provide educational leadership, both within and outside the school system; keep the staff and public informed as to the activities, needs and successes of the school district.

8) Maintain all personnel records, pupil accounting, business records, and other records which are necessary as prescribed by law or the policies of the board of education.

9) Delegate to other staff members the authority necessary for effective operation of the schools. However, in all cases the superintendent shall be held responsible by the board of education.

10) See that all laws and regulations are complied with.

11) Perform any other duties which are necessary to the office or assigned by the board of education.

Board of Education Meetings

All meetings of a board of education are subject to the "Open Meetings Law" enacted by the General Assembly of Illinois. Section I of the law states:

> It is the public policy of the state that public commissions, boards, and councils and other public agencies in the state exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of this act that their official deliberations be conducted openly.

The Open Meeting Law is expressly applicable to school boards and significantly supplements those provisions of *The School Code* relating to school board meetings. In addition to stating a general public policy on meetings of public bodies, the Open Meetings Law:

1) States that meetings of public agencies, including school boards and their subordinate committees, must be open to the public; makes exceptions for certain specified matters which may be discussed in executive session.

2) Requires that meetings shall be at specific times and places convenient to the public.

3) Prohibits public meetings, other than those regularly scheduled, on legal holidays.

4) Requires notice of all public meetings to be given to (a) the general public, and (b) certain news media.

5) Requires preparation of a schedule of regular meetings. Requires publication of a change in regular meeting dates.

6) Provides penalties for violations.

The types of meetings for boards of education are grouped into five categories, namely: organizational, regular, special, adjourned, and committee.

Organizational Meeting

The School Code mandates that within seven days following the election of school board members an organizational meeting of the board must be held. At this meeting, responsibility is transferred from the "old" board to the "new" board, and the new board elects its officers, establishes the date, time and location of regular board meet-

ings, adopts the written rules and procedures that will be followed in conducting board meetings, and conducts other business the board may consider necessary for the orderly transition of authority from the previous board to the new board.

Regular Meetings

Regular meetings are the meetings of the board as established at the organizational meeting. Regular meetings may include all business necessary for the ongoing operation of the school district and any other items included in the regular meeting agenda or as authorized by board policy.

Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the board president or by any three members of the board. Notice must be written and presented to each board member 48 hours before the meeting if delivered by mail—24 hours if delivered in person. The notice must contain an agenda for the meeting and discussions are restricted to those items listed in the agenda. Public notice also is required.

Adjourned Meetings

By a majority vote of the board of education members present and voting at any regular or officially called special meeting, the board may schedule and hold an adjourned meeting for the continuation of discussion and transaction of business. Any action that could have properly been taken at the initial meeting may be taken at the adjourned meeting.

Committee Meetings

Some school boards establish committees to give attention to particular areas of business of the school district. Some boards use the total board as a "committee of the whole."

Official decisions of the board can only be made by the board of education at a duly constituted meeting. Therefore, committees have no authority to make decisions binding upon the board. The only action of a committee is to recommend action to the board. However, committee meetings do come under the Open Meetings Law.

A Quorum for Meetings

For any meeting scheduled or called to conduct business, a quorum must be present. A majority of the full board membership constitutes a quorum. With a few exceptions, a majority vote is sufficient to pass or defeat a motion so long as a quorum is present. In selling real estate or leasing personal property, the law requires that two-thirds of the entire board membership must vote in favor of the action. In dismissing a tenured teacher, a majority vote of the entire board membership is required to make the dismissal effective.

Board minutes should indicate clearly the type of meeting held, along with all other information required by the Open Meeting Law. The actions at each board meeting should be recorded in an orderly, punctual and reliable manner. This includes the tabulation of the votes of individual members present on items requiring a roll call vote.

Executive Sessions

A board of education may go into executive (closed) session to discuss certain topics specified in the Open Meetings Law. In executive session no persons other than proper administrative personnel, the legal counsel, and other persons whose information or participation is necessary for the purpose of the discussion should be present except for members of the board. All matters discussed in executive session should be held strictly confidential by all present. Among the matters which may be discussed in executive session are these:

1) Collective negotiating matters between public employers and their employees or representatives;

2) The acquisition of real estate or the selling price of real estate;

3) Litigation that is pending or imminent;

4) Information regarding the appointment, employment or dismissal of an employee or officer;

5) Complaints lodged against an officer or employee;

6) Student disciplinary hearings or individual students in special education programs;

7) Appointment of a member to fill a vacancy.

The above list is not all inclusive. Moreover, each of the topics that may be discussed in executive session is subject to legal interpretation. Thus, whether a school board can go into executive session to discuss any particular matter must be determined by the facts in each situation.

Executive sessions are limited to discussions or hearings. Formal actions must be taken in public.

4. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

General Powers and Duties

Because public education is a responsibility of the State, boards of education have only those powers and duties granted by the General Assembly. Such powers and duties are stated in *The School Code*, especially in Article 10. Board powers also include those that can be reasonably assumed to be necessary to carry out the expressed powers and duties of the board.

Duties are mandatory—things the board of education *must* do. Powers are permissive—things the board *may* do.

Among the duties of the school board set forth in Article 10 of *The School Code* are these:

- maintain records to substantiate claims for state aid;
- employ teachers and fix their salaries;
- provide necessary revenue;
- direct what shall be taught and what textbooks used;
- pay all orders and let all contracts;
- maintain kindergartens;
- employ a superintendent "who shall have charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the board;"
- adopt a school calendar.

Note that some of these duties call for school board policies (directing what shall be taught, for example). Still other duties are largely routine or ministerial—such as maintaining records and paying orders. In nearly all instances, however, the board of education relies on its professional staff—through the superintendent—to either carry out the board duty or to help carry it out. In other words, the board delegates authority to the staff to carry out a duty and holds the staff responsible. But the board itself is responsible to the state and the community.

Of all duties assigned to the school board, perhaps the most significant is the duty:

> "...to adopt and enforce all necessary rules for the management and government of the public schools of their district."

This duty makes the school board responsible for exercising discretion in adopting policies and gives those policies the force of law. School boards have other specific powers of course, such as the power to borrow money, make repairs to buildings, suspend or expel students, and dismiss teachers for certain causes. The school board's implied powers, which it needs in order to effectively govern the schools, stem largely from this duty to "adopt and enforce all necessary rules."

School board "rules" are commonly referred to as "policies," and they are the tools by which the board exercises its discretionary powers. *The School Code* requires that "rules adopted by the school board shall be filed for public inspection in the administrative office of the district." It is essential, therefore, that the school board put its rules or policies in writing, formally adopt them, and make them available to the public. If these steps are not followed, school board policies do not exist in the eyes of the law and may not be upheld if challenged in court.

Board Policies

Policies are the principles and/or rules adopted by the board to chart a course of action for the school district. They tell what the school board wants—and how much.

Because policies should be consistent with the board's philosophy and objectives for the schools, it helps to have the philosophy and objectives in writing, too. The philosophy and objectives represent the long-range and short-range goals of the community and the board of education for the district. Each policy adopted should in some way relate to the district's mission.

Board policies, of course, must also be consistent

with state and federal laws, which means that policies are constantly in a state of revision. In general terms, board policies should answer the following questions:

What are the responsibilities of the community, the board, the staff and the students to the district?

What does the board intend to do in meeting its responsibilities?

What is the structure and organization of the school district?

What programs of educational experiences are to be provided?

What does the board expect from its staff, students, and the public?

Policies are essential if the board, staff, and community are to understand one another and work together toward the goals of the district.

It is not possible to draft school board policies that will cope with any and all eventualities that may arise. However, good policies will give direction to the board members, administrators, and staff members directly responsible for achieving the board's aims.

Take my word for it, Mr. Hawkins. The school board expects your disciplinary committee to play an *advisory* role.

In developing policies, it is advisable to consult with any individuals or groups who will be affected. Because the superintendent is charged with implementing policies, it is essential that the superintendent be involved in the preparation of all policies.

School board policies follow different codification formats. The typical board policy handbook includes such headings as:

Education Philosophy—Commitments
Governance—Board of Education
Administration
Staff Personnel
Student Personnel
Educational Program—Instruction
Auxiliary Services
Business Procedures—Fiscal Management
Buildings and Sites
School-Community Relations

Board of education policies should be periodically reviewed and kept up-to-date with changes in law and local conditions.

Following Board Policy

Policies represent "laws" or "ordinances" enacted by the board of education. As such, they state how the board intends to carry out its various duties and exercise its various powers.

The school board's credibility with employees and the community depends to a large extent on how clearly it states its intentions and how consistently it adheres to them. A board that does not follow its own policies is saying one thing while it does another. Inconsistency in abiding by policy is especially confusing for employees who are expected to carry out board policy in the classroom and administrative office.

A school board may properly modify a policy at any time in a manner that is consistent with the law. But such changes should be made knowingly. When a board wishes to make a decision that is contrary to its own policies, the first step should be to change the policy to reflect the new thinking of the board.

Administrative Rules and Regulations

Once a policy has been established by the board, it becomes the responsibility of the superintendent and the staff to put it into action. This is often accomplished through administrative rules and regulations that state how, by whom, when, and where the principles of the policy will be administered.

Administrative rules and regulations are typically prepared by the superintendent and staff and are sometimes approved by the board of education. However, as the superintendent partici-

pates with the board in developing policies, the board may advise the superintendent in this matter.

Administrative rules and regulations are extremely important to a school district. Not only are they the vehicle for carrying out the policies of the board of education, rules and regulations provide one means of evaluating the performance of the administration, staff, and educational program. Are the objectives and the goals of the district as set forth in the policies being fulfilled by the administrative rules and regulations? If not, is the failure due to the administrative rules and regulations, lack of understanding of such rules, or the neglect or inability of certain staff members to perform the necessary tasks?

Administrative rules and regulations also should be reviewed frequently to be certain they are consistent with board policies.

The administrative rules and regulations in printed form must be available to all employees who are affected by them or who must enforce them. Some rules and regulations also must be communicated to students and parents.

Monitoring school district performance

Simply put, school boards are supposed to know what's going *on* in the classroom without going *in*. They delegate to the superintendent the responsibility to find out and report in a comprehensible way the learning results of the schools. Then the board gives the superintendent the authority and the resources to develop a process of management that accomplishes the important mission it has assigned. When the management team has done its job, the board should have a basis on which to make decisions and monitor the educational performance of the district—its primary obligation.

Board members can expect various kinds of useful information to assist them in understanding the district's educational performance. Student learning information—achievement test scores, for example—is readily obtainable and helpful in gauging the success of schools. Interpretation of the information for the board is crucial—that's a job for the superintendent, management team, and teachers, who may also need the counsel of outside professionals. Other indicators of performance include student opinions and attitudes toward the school, the teachers, the programs; observations and feedback from parents and other citizens; employee opinions and attitudes, and student discipline, attendance and dropout rates. While no single measure can be used to evaluate the school system, the board should review a variety of information and listen carefully and critically to the conclusions and recommendations of the management team and staff.

Boards of education get into trouble by making decisions without performance information. The following situations are not uncommon:

1) A high school course is added because a small, vocal community segment believes it is essential. Later, the board finds it cannot finance its basic program. The new addition is cut and the community group becomes angry.

2) Expenditures are made in areas where learning results already are satisfactory (if only the board had known). Corrective action is not taken in areas where performance is unsatisfactory (if only the board had known). Once the children subjected to inadequate educational experiences leave the school system, it is too late for the board to make up for its mistakes.

The management team should present information to the board in a form that the board member can readily understand (no educational jargon). The information should have been analyzed so that the district's strengths and weaknesses are clearly indicated, with areas for improvement identified. Alternative courses of action should be made available, unless only one approach is clearly feasible. The superintendent should indicate the preferred course of action and the justification for it, along with advantages and disadvantages. Unless the board receives such information, analytical support, and managerial recommendations from the superintendent and his management team, it cannot discharge its own responsibilities effectively.

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5. THE SCHOOL BOARD IN ACTION

Board Operations

Among the policies of the school board should be some procedural rules for conducting board meetings. *Robert's Rules of Order* provides an excellent resource for boards in establishing policies as to conduct of meetings. In general, board meetings should be planned to not exceed two hours in length. Longer meetings lead to fatigue and inefficiency. Board agendas should be carefully planned and the rules governing board meetings should be well stated in the policies of the board of education.

Board Agenda and Meeting Packet

The agenda for a board meeting gives the order of business, listing specific items for consideration under each heading. Here is an example:

Sample Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of minutes
4. Recognition of visitors, delegations, and petitions
5. Business—treasurer and financial reports, payment of bills, ratification of invoices, board committee reports and other business items necessary.
6. Old business
7. New business
8. Superintendent's report
9. Adjournment

The board agenda frequently is not this simple. On many occasions there will be circumstances which will require a more complicated format.

Agenda items should be specific, so that what is to be considered can be clearly understood by board members and the public. Items not listed on the agenda should normally not be considered or acted upon by the board at that session. Other items brought to the attention of the board from any source, such as from visitors, should be referred by the president to the administration, attorney, or a board committee and scheduled for a future meeting.

Usually the superinendent is responsible for compiling items for the agenda. Board members may request that items be placed on the agenda. Board policies should state how agendas are to be prepared, as well as procedures and deadlines for submitting agenda items. The agenda, along with explanatory material, should be distributed to board members several days in advance of the meeting.

A packet accompanying the agenda sent to board members should provide all supporting information and the recommendations of the superintendent about each agenda item. If the agenda and background information are distributed two to four days before the meeting, board members can be expected to arrive at the board meeting ready to discuss and transact business.

Meeting Rules and Conduct

The agenda establishes the sequence of events for the meeting. Policies of the board determine how the meeting is conducted.

Most school boards develop rules of procedure based on a combination of *Robert's Rules of Order*, common sense and courtesy. The most effective rules of procedures are those that:

- allow business to be transacted efficiently;
- protect the right of all board members to participate fully; and
- maintain a positive relationship among all members.

The president should be expected to conduct meetings in accordance with rules established by the full board. The manner in which board meetings proceed is a reflection on the full board and the school district. For example, the board must be

mindful that the "Open Meetings Law" is applicable to its meetings. Executive sessions should be held to a minimum.

It also is advisable to show courtesy to visitors. The president can take a few minutes to welcome visitors and to explain the agenda and how the board functions.

Records of the Meeting

Adequate minutes and related records of board of education meetings are required by law and represent the only legal record certifying the actions of the board. From a legal standpoint, *a school board speaks only through its minutes.*

The minutes of meetings indicate the date, time, and place of the meeting, type of meeting, members present or absent, the general substance of all matters proposed or discussed, the exact wording of all motions or resolutions brought to a vote, and a record of all votes taken (by individual members if a roll call is called for). It is not necessary, nor usually desirable, to include in the minutes verbatim transcriptions or comments of individual members.

A Second Meeting

The regular meetings of the board of education are often filled with routine duties and other business that must be transacted. Policies and goals of the school board often receive inadequate attention.

Because the development of policies and goals represents a major function of the board, many boards hold a second, seminar-type meeting each month. Such meetings should be carefully planned to provide ample time for questions and the sharing of views among board members, the administration, and the public.

Visitors at Board Meetings

Boards of education should encourage the attendance of parents, staff members, the press, and other citizens at meetings. Special efforts should be extended by the board to make visitors welcome and attendance at meetings productive and informative.

It would be wise to provide a copy of the agenda for each visitor. In many districts, the rules for the conduct of meetings and the steps citizens can take to communicate with the board are printed and distributed to eliminate confusion.

Supporting Board Decisions

More and more school boards are making decisions by consensus rather than simple majority rule. This means board members agree to "give a little" when the board must choose from two or more options. The board can then adopt a course of action that all members can support—or at least live with and agree not to sabotage.

Consensus decision making avoids the win-lose approach of "majority rule," leads to better teamwork, and usually produces better decisions.

Sometimes, however, a board cannot reach a consensus within a reasonable length of time and must adopt a motion that offends one or more members. When that happens, the board member in the minority may be tempted to publicly criticize the actions of the majority. Each member, of course, has a right and a duty to state his views in an effort to prevail before the formal vote is taken. But what about after the vote? Depending upon the nature of the decision, the board member may confront a dilemma—to support the decision or to fight it.

Obviously, the relationship among board members is readily observed by the public and establishes the tone for human relationships throughout the school community. Board members who fight among themselves have a negative impact on staff morale and public confidence.

Moreover, from a legal standpoint, a board decision is a decision of the total board, not just of the majority. (A contract, for example, is with the board, not just with part of it.)

On the other hand, can a board member be expected to support a decision that goes entirely against his principles?

The board member can begin to resolve the dilemma by examining these questions:

- Support is a matter of degree. (If I can't honestly work or speak in favor of the majority's decision, can I at least live with it in silence?)
- Would support (or acceptance) of the majority's decision force me to compromise a basic principle or belief? Or can I recognize that what's best in this case is simply a matter of opinion or judgment?
- What would be the consequences if I speak out against the decision? What would be the consequences if I remain silent?
- Can I work with other members of the board and superintendent in an effort to modify the decision in the future?

Most board members find that on most decisions it is better to support (or accept) majority decisions while retaining the right to seek changes through constructive channels (such as introducing new information to the board). Community turmoil is too often the result when a board member seeks the support of citizens, interest groups, or employees in making a majority decision look bad.

Relations with Administration and Staff

The board of education can officially act only through board meetings. However, to develop and operate a good educational program a spirit of team work, trust and cooperation must exist among the school board, the administration and the staff, as well as the public. This is accomplished by understanding the roles of each individual or group, acting in accordance with those roles, and keeping communication open.

Most school boards achieve close cooperation and coordination by delegating executive responsibilities to one person—the superintendent of schools. The board of education, like the board of directors of any large corporation, speaks and acts through an executive officer who is guided by the policies of the board. Therefore, the personal and professional relationship between the board and the superintendent must be of the highest quality. The "Statement of Principles and Procedures for Effective Cooperation Between a Board of Education and Its Chief Administrator," adopted by the Illinois Association of School Boards and Illinois Association of School Administrators, is a good reference for determining the relationship necessary for the operation of a good school district. It appears as Appendix E on page 31.

The board delegates responsibility for management of the school district to the superintendent and supports him in carrying out management functions. The board, of course, must hold the superintendent responsible and regularly evaluate his performance.

For more detailed insights into the school board's relationship with management, see *Effective Schools Through Effective Management*, published by the Illinois Association of School Boards. IASB also has developed guidelines for evaluating the board's chief executive officer and published them in *Planned Appraisal of the Superintendent.* These volumes may be available in your school board's library.

After the meeting

Outside the board room, members must exercise discretion. They should be careful when talking about school matters in public or in casual conversations with friends. A board member's every word can have considerable impact on public opinion—even legal implications. In one district, a teacher who was not rehired claimed that a board member (and the superintendent) talked about her case out in the community. She sued the district for defamation of character. Board members should withhold comments on problems related to individual employees and students.

One difficult adjustment for board members is dealing with the constant verbal bombardment from constituents—about school, staff, programs, and board action. In most communities, there are frequent rumors circulating about the schools and their employees. One skill for a board member to master quickly is the art of handling gossip. Often the best reaction is to not dignify gossip with a statement or comment; suggest instead that it be put in writing and sent to the board office.

Criticism is a different matter. Board members should pay attention to it, listen to it, and share it with the appropriate person, usually the superintendent. No board member wants to appear uninformed about board or district matters, but board members cannot know all of the details of the district's operations, and saying so is not a poor reflection on their performance.

Pressures of many kinds and from many sources come with the job of school board member. New members might as well expect them—formal (at board meetings) or informal (on the street or over dinner). The best advice on how to cope with pressures is to make no promises, no deals—they may come back to haunt you.

Board members need to be particularly cautious in their contacts with members of the staff. Although board members have no individual authority, there will be members of the community and staff who do not recognize this limitation. Thus, when board members offer suggestions to the staff, they can be easily interpreted as directives, with unfortunate and unintended consequences embarrassing to all concerned. Most problems should be referred to the building principal or the superintendent. Or it could be suggested that a letter be sent to the board president. Most experienced board members find it awkward to act as a message bearer for citizens, and soon learn not to commit themselves until they have heard and analyzed both sides of a story.

Board members also should refrain from assuming special privileges in visiting schools. A board member who has children in school will find it advisable to reassure the principal, teachers and his neighbors that no special attention is wanted for himself or his children.

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6. FINANCING THE SCHOOLS

Good school boards know they are in the business of education. They are concerned about education and base their decisions on the educational needs and requirements of their communities. However, in view of the many non-educational pressures confronting boards, it is not easy to focus on purely educational issues.

The financing of public schools is undoubtedly the most common problem confronting boards. In these times of increasing costs, decreasing revenue, and demands for improved and expanded educational services, the financing of quality education must be a concern that occupies the minds of board members much of the time.

Each session of the General Assembly brings significant changes in the financing of Illinois schools. Therefore, it behooves each board to have adequate school business management and legal advisory talent readily available.

It is a vital responsibility of each board member to understand the fiscal concerns and problems of the school district. Not only is this vital to the development and maintenance of a good educational program, the board receives and expends large amounts of public monies and the board is accountable for all of it.

Study Your District

It is recommended that each board devote a special session, soon after each board election, to a discussion of the school budget and fiscal matters. Such a session can be based on such publications as *The School Code* and *State, Local and Federal Financing for Illinois Public Schools,* published by the Illinois State Board of Education. These materials, along with the district's current budget and its most recent audit, should be studied carefully.

Sources of funds

In general, Illinois school districts have four primary sources of income: 1) local taxes, 2) state aid, 3) federal aid, and 4) borrowing.

Local Taxes—Each year the superintendent should present the school board with a proposed budget. The board studies the proposal and places a tentative budget on file for public inspection. At the end of the inspection period, the board must hold a public hearing and then formally adopt its budget.

Based on the budget, the board adopts a tax levy. The levy states the amount of dollars the budget calls for in local taxes. (The remainder of the budget consists of what the board expects to acquire in state aid and from other sources.)

The board must adopt its budget during the first quarter of each fiscal year—that is, before October 1—and then must file its tax levy with the county clerk. The county clerk then extends taxes and produces bills for individual property owners. Taxes are collected and distributed to school districts nine months to a year or more after the board adopts its budget and tax levy. (The timing of tax collection and distribution varies widely among the counties.)

Note, however, that taxes extended by the county clerk are typically lower than taxes levied by the board. Theoretically, the levy can be any amount called for by the budget. The extension, however, is limited by maximum tax rates allowable in each of the school board's major funds. The maximum tax extension is determined by multiplying the maximum tax rate by the district's total equalized assessed property valuation.

State Aid—The state of Illinois guarantees that each school district will have a certain amount of revenue for each pupil in average daily attendance. A few wealthy districts raise nearly the full amount from local taxes and receive little state aid. A few districts with low property values raise only a small portion of the guaranteed amount from taxes and receive most of their funds from

the state. On the average, the state pays about 40 percent of school district operating costs, local taxes pay about 53 percent, and federal aid pays about 7 percent.

The state's share includes special funding in specific categories—such as transportation, handicapped education, vocational and adult education, driver education, and textbooks.

Federal Aid—The federal government has been involved with school support for many years in such areas as school lunches and vocational agriculture. Federal interest in public education grew during the 1960s and 1970s to include a literally endless array of special programs. Some federal money supports the state in its funding of schools; some of it goes to districts that apply for special grants.

Federal funding of education declined during the early 1980's.

Borrowing—School boards can incur both long-term and short-term debt. Long-term debt usually represents bond and interest payments for buildings and requires voter approval. Short-term debt most often represents borrowing against future tax collections through tax anticipation warrants or notes.

Short-term borrowing is designed to enable a school district to pay its bills when taxes are delayed. Such borrowing does not represent true deficit financing, because the loans are repaid from current income.

Many districts, however, are forced by circumstances to borrow against taxes anticipated for the next fiscal year. In a few unusual circumstances, boards borrow against taxes anticipated two years ahead. Borrowing against future years' taxes is deficit financing in that it means either that current income is less than current expenditures or that a deficit is being carried over from an earlier year.

Boards also have access to longer-range forms of borrowing to help them erase accumulated debt.

One of the most valuable insights a school board member can acquire is to understand the meaning of borrowing and the meaning of debt in their various contexts. Borrowing can be constructive or it can become an insidious disease eating at the foundation of the school district.

Still other sources of revenue for the school district include student tuition and fees, rental of school property, private funds, income from school sponsored activities, insurance, and interest. Usually such sources provide very limited amounts of money. However, many districts have found it productive to actively manage the investment of idle funds.

One of the most valuable insights a school board member can acquire is to understand the meaning of borrowing and the meaning of debt.

Accounting for School Funds

Accounting procedures in the state of Illinois require that income and expenditures be accounted for through the use of funds.

A *fund* is a group of revenue and expenditure accounts set up to obtain an objective. The *educational fund* deals primarily with the instruction of students; the *operations, building and maintenance fund* is primarily concerned with energy costs and the upkeep of buildings; the *transportation fund* records all revenue and expenditures pertaining to the transportation program of the district. There are many other smaller funds set up to meet specific purposes. These funds should be studied and understood by each board member.

Board policies should be very specific in relation to the budget, accounting, purchases, other expenditures, financial reports, audits, and other financial records of the board.

Financial Decision Making

A well-informed board of education can make a big difference to the financial health of a school district. To be capable of making the necessary decisions, board members must understand the complex and changing financial problems of the district. This requires a great deal of time and study. Outside resource persons to assist in the study and review of school financing can be a most productive and valuable experience for board members and the superintendent.

7. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND THE SCHOOL BOARD

Teachers and Unions

A state law that became effective on January 1, 1984 requires Illinois school boards to recognize employee unions and to bargain in good faith with them regarding wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

School board members may, out of frustration or inexperience, consider the unionization of teachers as inherently evil or nonprofessional. They may blame themselves or the administration when their teachers turn to unions. However, there are a number of factors which cause teachers to unionize, many of which are beyond the control of local boards and administrators. For example:

- The growing size of the school bureaucracy reduces lines of communication.
- Job shortages in education often make it difficult for the dissatisfied teacher to switch employers.
- The teaching profession includes more and more primary family wage earners.
- Taxpayers are resentful of increased school costs and demand evidence of results.
- Widespread social changes produced a decline of respect for authority and other problems which make teachers' jobs more difficult.

Economic, psychological, and security needs of teachers also are factors in their decision to apply union strategy and tactics to local situations. The security needs of teachers are easily manipulated by skilled union organizers. Even the most benevolent and humanistic school board's reluctance to grant union recognition is itself a tool for the organizer.

Board members find their roles frustrating until they learn to deal with teachers both as union members and as human beings. Efforts to give teachers more than the union does only intensify union demands. Efforts to break the union only increase tensions and unite teachers behind the union.

The board member should distinguish between employee relations and labor relations, so that each can be treated separately, realistically, and professionally. The ability to view the teacher's human and professional needs as separate and distinct from his or her security (union) needs keeps conflict and frustration to a minimum.

Human Relations and Labor Relations

School managers often confuse human relations with labor relations. Their thinking is that "maybe if we deal on a human level the needs for a

Human Relations and Labor Relations

	Human Relations	Labor Relations
Process	Consensus	Adversary
Agenda	Problems and Needs	Demands
Arena	Personal-Humanistic	Legal
Result	Change or Development	Contract Obligation
Emphasis	Self-Actualization and Growth	Economics and Security
Goals	Internal (for the school)	External (for the union)
Participants	Individuals	Union
Location	Local Issues	Statewide Demands
Benefits	To organizational goals and clients through better programs	To union and its members through increased benefits, power, security

union will disappear." Humanistic board members and administrators are easily confused by the distinction between human relations and labor relations. They try to make human relations programs replace labor relations, even though the two are distinctly different, incompatible, and serve different purposes.

Role of the School Board

As boards of education become involved in collective bargaining, they encounter some new roles and responsibilities for themselves and their administrators. They also encounter a relationship with a new kind of school expert—the chief negotiator.

In general, the role of the board of education is to engage in planning activities that lead to a reasonable contract with the union. Planning includes developing goals, objectives, and parameters for the negotiator. One of the most important steps is selecting the negotiator who will speak for the bargaining team.

During the negotiating process, the board and the negotiating team should maintain close communication. Usually this is best accomplished through the superintendent or his designee, who probably works closely with the bargaining team in addition to regular duties as chief executive. Sometimes communication can be handled best by the head negotiator dealing directly with the board. The total board should not get involved in direct negotiations with the union. Even more important, *individual board members should resist any impulse to communicate directly with the union unless so authorized by the total board.*

School managers often think, "if we deal on a human level the needs for a union will disappear."

Initial communications between the board and its bargaining team provide the team with the goals and objectives which the board would like to pursue. The board will want to establish some parameters to guide the bargaining team. There should be some flexibility, but there should be a frank indication of which issues and dollar amounts the board feels most strongly about. As negotiations proceed, the board and team may have to discuss which items the board is willing to take to impasse proceedings or over which to accept a strike.

One of the goals of the chief negotiator and the bargaining team is to negotiate a contract which the board will ratify. If communications have been regular and open between the board and the team, there should be little doubt that the agreement will be ratified. Boards, however, are obligated to carefully review the tentative agreement prior to ratification. If any part of the agreement is not satisfactory, the board retains the right to withhold ratification.

The School Board's Role in Labor Relations

As Policy Setter

- Develop parameters based on district goals.
- Select negotiator and procedures.
- Insist on employee relations goals and objectives in bargaining, in contract management, and in human relations.
- Understand unionization.

As Individual Board Members

- Develop basic understanding of bargaining.
- Distinguish labor relations from human relations.
- Don't be co-opted or used by the union to further its goals.
- Realize that the board's public position in labor disputes must be unanimous.
- Protect the confidentiality of the board's strategy.
- Don't play mediator.

At Impasse

- Understand and expect pressures.
- Establish a unanimous position with one spokesman.
- Know the legal limitations of individual board members.
- Don't stand alone—present a united school board position and get community support.

This chapter is excerpted from *Collective Bargaining and the School Board Member*, by Max A. Bailey and Ronald R. Booth. Copyright 1978 by Illinois Association of School Boards.

Appendix A

Making the Board Meeting Work is Every Member's Job

By CLAYTON F. THOMAS

The effective school board is one that aggressively tackles its work as a unified group.

Each school board, of course, consists of individuals who may or may not care about the success of the total group—or its public image. Some members are proud to be a part of the board and take personal responsibility for making meetings productive. Other members have personal axes to grind or simply prefer to be doing something else.

Look around at the school boards you know. Note that some boards seem able to weather just about any crisis. They display little hesitancy or awkwardness in dealing with the most controversial issue in public meetings. They respond to issues as a team and emerge with solutions that leave individual members still on friendly terms with one another. No matter what the issue, the board survives intact.

Other boards never quite learn to work as a group. They have difficulty resolving the simplest problems. Their hesitancy or internal bickering give their constituents a bad impression. Such boards may spend an inordinate amount of time in executive sessions—perhaps arguing among themselves.

The difference? On the successful board, each member feels responsible for productive meetings. The responsibility is not left entirely to the board president or the superintendent.

It goes almost without saying that the responsible board member comes to meetings prepared, abides by the board's rules of procedure, and respects the total board's goals and policies. Certainly nothing is more disconcerting than a board member who unseals his agenda packet at the start of the meeting. (The sound of a tearing envelope is a warning to all that someone is not prepared.) Even more difficult is the member who pursues a separate agenda.

In addition to these basic considerations, there are many ways in which the individual member influences the behavior of the total board, for better or worse. Here are some suggestions for the board member who wants to exercise a positive influence in making board meetings productive and upgrade the public's perception of the school board:

1) Use appropriate communications skills.

2) Deal constructively with conflict.

3) Deal constructively with uncooperative board members.

4) Help new board members become part of the group.

5) Encourage your board to evaluate its meetings.

1. Using communications skills

If things did not go well at your last board meeting, ask yourself how you could have helped. Did you talk too long? Were you willing to share ideas and feelings? Did you truly listen to others' ideas and feelings? Did you seek the opinions of others who were reluctant to speak? When each member feels a sense of responsibility for a successful meeting and uses reasonably appropriate communication skills, success is easily attained.

Some of the essential communication skills are *paraphrasing* in order to ensure understanding of ideas, *listening for feeling* in order to comprehend how people feel, and *giving feedback* to explain your own thoughts and feelings. Fortunately these skills are not difficult to acquire. They just take practice.

• **Paraphrasing.** The process of restating in your own words what others say and then checking it out with them is called paraphrasing. For example, after listening to a member expound on the school tax rate, you might paraphrase him or her by saying, "Then you are not in favor of tax rate increase, is that right?" Note that the paraphrase ends in the form of a question in order to check out the accuracy of your paraphrasing. A small amount of practice will improve your skill, but it also will demonstrate that paraphrasing is possible *only if you are actively listening*. Therefore, focusing on paraphrasing eliminates the need to focus on listening as a skill. Listening becomes a byproduct of paraphrasing.

• **Listening for feeling.** It is important to recognize that feelings are communicated just as ideas are, although not always with words. Facial expressions, gestures, body positions, and voice tones as well as words are clues to a person's feelings. When impressions of a

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This article is reprinted from the July-August, 1981 issue of *Illinois School Board Journal*. Clayton Thomas is a professor in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations at Illinois State University, Normal.

person's feelings are received, they can be checked out with such statements as:

"You seem upset by what I said. Are You?"

"Am I correct that you are disappointed in our decision?"

It is important that your perception of someone's feelings be expressed as a question, not as a statement of fact.

Many times feelings are obvious but never acknowledged by either party—even though we know that these feelings are at least as important as thoughts or ideas. The significance of listening for and acknowledging feelings is that it is an excellent way to dissipate or prevent conflict. When negative feelings are identified early, they can be dealt with before a major explosion occurs. Checking out feelings also allows us to correct any misconception we might have about a person's feelings before we act inappropriately.

• **Giving feedback.** The ability to communicate our own ideas and feelings to others, particularly when these feelings are negative, is an important skill for board members. Most often, feedback is intended to change someone else's behavior. Therefore, feedback must be presented in a non-threatening manner. If feedback produces a defensive reaction, little behavior change will occur. On the other hand, the feedback cannot be so subtle that it passes unnoticed. The difference between feedback that generates a defensive reaction and that which creates a more favorable response is not the frankness of the comments. Being "politely frank" with a person can be just as unproductive as being blatantly obnoxious.

Perhaps the most important feedback skill is the ability to use *descriptive* feedback as opposed to that which is judgmental. Almost without exception, a judgmental statement intended to change another person's behavior will create resistance to change. When you say to a person who frequently uses profanity that he "is vulgar," you have made a judgmental statement. That is, you have judged the person and found him vulgar. The recipient of such a statement is likely to respond in kind with, "Your manner of speech isn't so ____ good either."

A more productive approach is to describe the impact that profanity has on you, such as: "I have listened to you for 20 minutes and you have used that word six times and each time I felt like leaving." Such feedback is not presented as a universal truth, but as one person's observation and reaction. As such, it does not put the profanity-user on the defensive. The statement leaves the recipient free to accept or not accept your feedback. It may generate some negative responses, but the seed will have been planted. The recipient will now have information about the impact of his behavior which may help him change.

It should be noted that descriptive feedback may also be one's feeling as a result of the other's behavior. In the previous example, the statement, "I feel like leaving" is such a statement. Comments such as, "It upsets me," "I became anxious," or "I wanted to cry" fall into the same category. When using feedback statements reflecting your personal feelings, it is still important to be descriptive. To say, "*I feel you are* vulgar" is not different than saying, "*You are* vulgar." In either case it is judgmental. It would be far better to say, "Your use of profanity disturbs me," which describes your feeling as a result of the behavior.

2. Dealing with conflict

Each board member is a product of his or her own unique experiences in life. Consequently, each has different values and goals, making some conflict inevitable. The challenge for the school board member is to recognize that conflict has many positive aspects and to learn how to deal with conflict so that negative features are minimized.

One positive feature of conflict is that it results in better decisions because individuals are forced to defend their positions. Open discussion allows many members to influence the decision. (Seven heads are better than one.) Conflict also stimulates people to get involved. This involvement not only improves the decisions, it gives members a chance to drain off any feelings of hostility.

It is important to recognize the positive values of conflict, because a feeling that conflict is undesirable usually results in sweeping disagreements under the rug. The result is a latent form of conflict that smolders for long periods of time, sapping the energies of the board. Eventually it bursts into heated arguments that further deteriorate relationships.

Board members must learn to bring differences out in the open early and to interact in a productive manner. This requires a combination of group processes and individual skills. Bringing conflict to the surface can be done by any member of the board who senses a conflict that needs discussing. In doing so, it is important not to make judgmental statements or assess blame. These opinions can come later.

For example, it is constructive to say, "I'm unhappy with the district's textbook policy."

It is destructive to say, "Last year's board used poor judgment in developing what is obviously a lousy textbook policy."

In the first example (which describes your feelings) the natural response is simply, "Why are you unhappy with the policy?" In the second case (which judges both the policy and the previous board) the natural tendency for veteran board members is to defend the policy, saying, "I suppose you think you can do better." The ensuing conflict will be a win-lose venture in which the losers will be unhappy and seek their revenge at another time. In the long haul, everyone will probably lose.

Once a conflict is brought to the surface, it is best dealt with openly in a problem-solving session where ideas are expressed and feelings shared. The aim should be to reach a consensus on the issue. This does not mean a unanimous vote is essential nor does it mean everyone has to agree. "Consensus" simply means that:

• All board members have expressed their opinions and feelings, and

• Everyone is willing to support the decision or at least willing to go along with the decision without sabotaging it.

Of course, some decisions reached by consensus must

subsequently be voted on to become a matter of official record.

Most people instinctively try to avoid conflict. During a discussion of conflict issues, it helps to keep in mind some of the ways that we typically avoid dealing effectively with conflict issues. In fact, it would help to permanently display a list of these behaviors in the school board meeting room. We are all guilty of these destructive behaviors when conflict arises and need to be reminded from time to time:

- Making attacking statements (i.e., that's stupid)
- Interrupting
- Talking in the third person (i.e., *they* think, rather than *I* think)
- Muddying the waters
- Changing the topic
- Withdrawing from the discussion

The behaviors that help deal constructively with conflict are:

- Listening and trying to understand
- Stating your own ideas, opinions, and feelings

As strange as it may seem, a common characteristic of most people in conflict situations or when dealing with controversial issues is to avoid admitting their own feelings. Such statements as "The citizens won't accept a district-wide sex education program" represent a common way of copping out. Such a statement does not provide a good point of discussion, because the speaker has not expressed his *own* feelings. For example, does the speaker feel that sex education is valuable and should be implemented? Or does the speaker dislike the program on moral or religious principles? Maybe the speaker likes the program but believes the community's response will be too unfavorable. Each of these interpretations of the statement suggests a different course of action or different topic of discussion for the board. Therefore, the sooner everyone's position is known, the sooner the group can come to grips with the real issue. Again, this involves a sincere effort to state your own ideas and feelings.

3. Working with the uncooperative member

Passing judgment on the behavior of others is always a dangerous practice. Attempts to change that behavior is even more so. Most of us generally behave as we do because (1) we are not aware of how our behavior is being perceived and (2) we are acting out some basic need, such as a need for belonging or status within the group.

In considering ways to deal with the uncooperative board member, one thing is worth remembering: we can only change our own behavior, not the behavior of others. If we expect others to do something different, we must ourselves do something different first. For example, *telling* people that they need to prepare for meetings, consider all the options before deciding, avoid becoming involved in administrative matters, or speak respectfully to others will not have much impact. However, *doing* something—such as holding new board member orientation sessions where a "problem" member plays a leadership role—may have an impact.

Sharing your negative feelings in a positive way rather than giving advice may motivate an individual to reconsider his behavior. Keep in mind that many times behavior can be improved by meeting an individual's basic needs for belonging and for recognition and status within the group. Ask yourself, "What have we done to make the uncooperative board member feel he or she belongs?" "What have we done to meet the ego-status needs of the individual?" Answers to these two questions, accompanied by appropriate behavior changes on your own part, frequently produce surprising results.

4. Helping the new board member

Newly-elected board members come to their first meetings as "outsiders" with ideas to share and a strong desire to belong. To be sure, a few come with their armor polished and their axes sharpened. In either case, the first objective of incumbent board members should be to achieve a level of "belonging" for each new member.

Each new board member, whether he is conscious of it or not, must find an answer to the question, "Who or what am I to be in this group of board members?" Until such feelings and emotions are dealt with, the individual will have difficulty functioning as a part of a team.

As new members struggle to establish an identity within the group, their behavior may take different forms. Some may be aggressive, some may be humorous, and others become listeners.

Eventually, each member finds a comfortable role which seems appropriate for this particular group. Once this role is found, the member will begin to feel a part of the group and begin to seek a share of the power and influence that the board of education controls as a group. The new members' behavior at this stage may consist of fencing, testing each other out, or overaggressiveness. These behaviors among new board members are normal, but some tension will be evident.

During this period of getting acquainted, all members of the board will be preoccupied with their own feelings and less able to listen to each other. Yet, this process of each board member and each board going through these growing pains is the way a board becomes a real group capable of a team effort.

In reaching a comfortable level of mutual trust, each member's attitudes and skills are important. The goal is to lead the new member to a sense of personal responsibility for the performance of the total board. To achieve this, each incumbent board member must feel partially responsible for helping the new member acquire a feeling of belonging.

Part of the task is accomplished by providing the new member with information and opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills. The rest of it depends on patience, understanding, and involvement.

5. Evaluate your meetings

It is a wise board of education that frequently takes stock of its meetings. A few minutes of discussion before adjourning can alleviate many potential problems. Talking about how the meeting went (not what was decided) can help all members, particularly new mem-

bers.

For example, if the meeting took longer than expected, discuss why. If you felt you had insufficient information to make a good decision, share your concern. If you were able to achieve consensus early, consider why the board seemed so productive.

It is far better to discuss these items as a group than it is to talk about them as you leave the meeting or complain to your spouse when you get home. This occasional self-analysis by a board should not take the place of an annual evaluation involving the superintendent. It will, however, make an annual evaluation much less traumatic.

These five steps should help any group of board members work together more effectively. In fact, if only one member puts them into practice with persistence, the beneficial results can be startling.

Appendix B

Procedural Policies are the Key to Smooth, Productive Meetings

By SUZANNE W. HUMPHREY

"It takes me two weeks to prepare for a board meeting and two weeks to recuperate."

"I've had it up to my ears with long meetings. I'll not serve another term."

Those comments, made by a school district superintendent and a five-year board member, respectively, are typical reactions to the frustrations for everyone involved in overly long, confusing and often unproductive board meetings.

Such exercises in frustration can be avoided by adopting and following some simple policies for organizing and conducting board meetings.

Every board should have policies addressing the following areas of procedure:

1) The agenda. The agenda is the order of business to be followed at each meeting and typically might include: call to order, reading and approval of the last meeting's minutes, approval of payment of bills, correspondence to the board, recognition of visitors and guests, unfinished business, new business, and adjournment.

2) Rules of order. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* is generally cited when a question of procedure arises, but the most successful meetings are conducted with a middle-of-the-road approach to parliamentary procedure. All board members should keep in mind that rules of order are only tools to allow for the smooth functioning of meetings, and that elaborate rules can be counterproductive.

3) Board Minutes. Minutes are the official record made of the proceedings of each meeting. Board policy should establish who will serve as secretary. This function may be filled by a board member, but a growing number of boards hire a secretary from the district's staff, allowing all board members to give full attention to the meeting's business.

Board minutes may be a very formal and brief recording of motions made, seconded and adopted, a record of who was present (and, in the case of visitors, who addressed the board) and action taken on budget items and expenditures.

Many boards choose to direct the secretary to write a detailed report of discussions, providing a more historical account of meetings. The format of minutes is a matter of style to be determined by each board.

4) Motions and formal resolutions. These are the bases of all parliamentary decisions, and normally must be stated by one board member and seconded by another. Although strict parliamentary procedure sets forth detailed procedures to be followed in every situation, procedural shortcuts may be set by policy. For example, motions need not be seconded; a proposal that is clear to everyone may be voted on without a formal motion; informal discussion of an item does not call for a motion, and motions may be made by the board president. (The practice of allowing the board president to vote only as a tiebreaker should be discouraged.)

5) Voting method. The process to be used by members to consent or dissent to each action item of the agenda should be spelled out. *The School Code* requires that yea and nay responses of each member be recorded on actions involving the expenditure of money. Many boards call roll and record votes on every motion. The order of roll call may be established in a variety of ways—alphabetically, first vote rotating according to an established membership list, or by rank according to office and length of service. The method used is not important, but should be clearly stated to avoid confusion.

A member may request that his or her vote be changed if the request is made before consideration of the next

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agenda item. Also, any member may request that his or her vote be recorded and a vote clarification statement be added to the minutes.

6) Number of votes required to pass motions. The number varies with the subject matter of the motion. What constitutes a quorum, and what motions require a majority of the total board membership are established by law. The dismissal of a teacher for any cause other than reduction or elimination of position must be approved by a majority vote of all members of the board rather than a majority of a quorum, for example.

7) Public participation. The law requires that board meetings be open to attendance by members of the public. Common practice is to recognize spectators on specific agenda items or during a period set aside for visitors' comments. Policy may set time limits for such comments. The board president has the responsibility to recognize visitors for comments, to maintain calm and order during the meeting, and call for an end to such comments when this seems necessary.

Simple, clear policy statements—written and kept in easily accessible form—on the above points will go a long way toward establishing a thoughtful deliberative atmosphere for conducting the business of the school district.

Appendix C

A Meeting About Meetings

It is a truism that cobblers don't take time to mend their own shoes, that mechanics don't take time to repair their own automobiles. Many school boards may be in a similar fix. Meetinged to death, few boards seem to take time from busy agendas to step back and evaluate objectively the quality of their meetings.

They should!

In fact, a meeting on meetings at least once a year could be an enlightening exercise for the board-administrative team. To this end, we offer the checklist that follows as an instrument for self-evaluation.

Improvement Needed:

___ 1. PLANNING. Has the board developed adequate planning procedures for determining agendas and preparing backup reports and briefings?

___ 2. PRE-MEETING DISSEMINATION. Has the board developed adequate procedures for getting meeting materials and notices in the hands of board members, the press, and public leaders two or three days in advance of meeting dates?

___ 3. PRE-MEETING CONFERENCE. Do the board president and superintendent confer before each meeting to review upcoming business, to clarify agenda items, and to anticipate possible problem areas?

___ 4. THE SETTING. Has the board found and furnished the best possible setting for its meetings?

___ 5. HOMEWORK. Do all board members study the agenda, read the reports, and come to meetings prepared to contribute to substantive discussions and not waste meeting time by going over matters that were already included in the pre-meeting folder?

___ 6. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT. Has the board established on orderly method whereby the public—including students—may get a hearing at board meetings? Does the board president make public visitors feel welcome in the board room?

___ 7. PROPER ROLE. Has the board developed a clear policy as to the kinds of matters which need not be brought to the board's attention and which may be handled by administrative action?

___ 8. RECOMMENDATIONS. Does the superintendent expedite business by specifying his "Recommended action" on each major agenda item?

___ 9. ADVICE. Does the board encourage the superintendent to invite staff specialists to board meetings to supply back-up advice and knowledge on recommended proposals?

___ 10. PACE. Do meetings begin on time? During meetings, does the board president keep an eye on the clock so that adequate time can be provided for important matters?

___ 11. CLARIFICATION. Does the board president clarify each agenda item? Does he clarify—for the benefit of board, press, and public—specific goals to be achieved? Is he adept at summarizing arguments before bringing matters to a vote?

___ 12. CONTROL. Does the board president keep discussion to the subject at hand? Does he bring members to order when they interrupt the speaker who has the floor or talk while the speaker is talking? Is he firm when firmness is required?

___ 13. POST-MEETING DISSEMINATION. Does the administration see to it that staff, students, and the public are immediately informed as to the results of "last night's meeting?"

___ 14. POLICIES. Has the board developed an adequate set of written policies or by-laws on Board Meeting Procedures?

Best wishes for better meetings!

This self-evaluation checklist is reprinted from *On Board: A Learning Experience in School Board Problem Solving*, published by the National School Boards Association.

Appendix D

Further Reading and Other Aids for Board Members

Although school board members are busy people, a certain amount of reading is essential to understanding educational affairs. Recognizing this, the Illinois Association of School Boards provides a regular flow of periodicals and other publications to each board member in its member school districts. IASB periodicals include:

- *Illinois School Board Journal*, a magazine issued every other month to keep you up with the critical issues facing education in Illinois and across the nation. Emphasis is on public policy and management methods.

- *School Board News Bulletin*, a newsletter issued 12 times each year, keeps you abreast of current events affecting school districts. Each board member also receives a *Calendar of Important School Dates* each year in August. Rapid communications from IASB are directed to school board presidents and superintendents through *Legislative Reports*, reports of teacher salary negotiations results, and other timely information.

School board members should also look to other sources for information and help. The publications listed below come from a variety of sources, including some which are available at nominal cost from the Illinois Association of School Boards. Many of the publications may be available in your district's Board of Education Library.

Books

The Organization and Control of American Schools. Campbell, Roald F., Cunningham, Luvern L., and McPhee, Roderick F., Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc.

Effective School Boards Meetings. Davidson, Jack L., West Nyack, N.Y.: Parker Publishing Co., Inc., 1970.

School Board and Superintendent: Their Effective Working Relationships. Dykes, Archie R. Danville: Interstate Publishers, 1971.

Problems and Prospects: Understanding School Boards. Peter J. Cistone. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1975. A National School Boards Association research study.

School Boards: Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership, The Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C., 1986

Effective Schools Through Effective Management, by Allen Klingenberg and Fredric Genck. Reviews problems confronting school management, explains what boards can do to encourage sound management, and offers basic principles and specific suggestions. IASB ($6 to members, $9.50 to non-members) 1978.

Planned Appraisal of the Superintendent. Reviews the board-superintendent relationship and explains how to improve that relationship through joint appraisal of performance. IASB ($4 to members; $7 to non-members). A companion book of exercises for developing a performance appraisal system is also available ($7 to members; $9.50 to non-members) Quantity discounts. 1978.

The Law of Public Education. Reutter, E. E., Jr. and Hamilton, R. R., Mineola, N.Y.: The Foundation Press, Inc., 1976, with supplements.

Becoming a Better Board Member. A detailed look at just about every aspect of being a school board member. Based on the insights of hundreds of board members and administrators. Published by National School Boards Association. Available in Illinois from IASB at special price to members ($10; $15 to non-members.) 1982.

Successful School Board Meetings, by Stuart A. Anderson. Covers legal procedures and practical rules for Illinois school board meetings, as well as helpful suggestions for dealing with conflict, improving communications, and making decisions. Published by IASB ($6 to members; $9 to non-members.) 1982; revised 1989.

Lobbying for the Public Schools. Explains how school board members and other citizens can work for good school legislation. Published by IASB ($5 to members; $7 to non-members.) 1985.

The School Official's Guide to Student Disciplinary Hearings. Describes procedures for suspensions and expulsion hearings and explains different roles of the board and administrators. IASB ($5 to members, $7.50 to non-members), 1986.

Periodicals

The American School Board Journal: Magazine published monthly by the National School Boards Association, 1680 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Single subscriptions, $38. Contains articles on the work of boards of education and on problems of school administration, school business, fiscal, and architectural subjects.

The Executive Educator: Magazine for school administrators published monthly by the National School Boards Association. News and feature articles also popular among board members. Single subscriptions: $45.

School Board News: Tabloid newspaper published twice a month (21 issues a year) by the National School Boards Association. Reports news and features of interest to local school boards, including significant state news and reports of federal government actions. Single subscriptions: $60.

Education U.S.A., weekly newsletter (eight pages) summarizing major issues and events across the nation. Single subscription, $81; bulk subscriptions available. National School Public Relations Association, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

Illinois Issues: Magazine published monthly by Sangamon State Unversity, Springfield, Illinois 62708. News and in-depth analyses of state government, politics, and public policy issues. Single subscriptions: $30.

Nation's Schools Report, newsletter (eight pages) issued 22 times a year reviews the education scene with emphasis on school management issues, problems and solutions. Annual subscription, $128.95. Capitol Publications, 1101 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Handbooks and Pamphlets

A variety of current handbooks and pamphlets are available in most school district offices. Here is a list of titles of particular interest to school board members. Check with your superintendent to see if copies are available in your district. If not, contact the source indicated. Unless a price is shown, there is no charge.

The School Code of Illinois. Includes all of Chapter 122 of *The Illinois Revised Statutes*, published by West Publishing Company. Limited copies distributed by Illinois State Board of Education. Additional copies usually may be purchased from IASB.

The Illinois Program for Evaluation, Supervision, and Recognition of Schools, Illinois State Board of Education Document One. Presents state standards for schools.

The Open Meetings Law: A Guide for School Boards, IASB. $1.00. 1978.

Your School Board and You. Some insights for school board candidates and other interested citizens. Available in bulk quantities for public distribution from IASB. 1981.

Guidelines for a Superintendent's Contract. Developed jointly by IASB and the Illinois Association of School Administrators. 1986

Guidelines for Fair Treatment of Administrators. Developed by a task force of the State Board of Education. Covers legal requirements and recommended personnel procedures. Available also from IASB. 1976.

Research Reports

Illinois Teacher Salary Schedule Study, State Board of Education. Presents scheduled salaries and policies for all Illinois school districts; analyzes averages and trends. (Limited copies available from IASB.) Data collected and report re-issued each year.

Collective Bargaining in Illinois Schools, Illinois Association of School Boards. Analyzes what school districts are doing at the bargaining table, how they are doing it, what they are negotiating, and the impact. Data collected and report re-issued each year since 1973-74. Contact IASB for current information and prices.

Other Publications

Both the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) publish some outstanding booklets on topics of concern to school boards. Publications from NSBA include research reports on many important policy issues. Lists of current titles, prices, and order information should be obtained from NSBA at 1680 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

NSPRA publishes a large number of special reports on school problems and trends. For a list of titles, write to: NSPRA at 1501 Lee Highway, Suite 201, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

Board Member Training

In addition to publications and workshops for newly elected school board members, IASB maintains year-round offerings to meet the needs of all school districts. Most board members attend the annual state conference and the semi-annual dinner meetings in their respective divisions. These sessions are planned by representatives of all the school districts involved.

As needs for information or training become apparent, IASB develops special interest workshops. Popular topics include policy development, collective bargain-

ing, communications and community relations, personnel management, and the like. Workshop announcements are mailed to all board members.

The National School Boards Association also sponsors many workshops and seminars at various locations across the country.

School Board Policy Services

Illinois school boards have access to several sources of help in developing, revising, or updating their policy manuals, including:

- *Illinois Association of School Boards* contracts with school boards for such work as review and evaluation of existing policies or complete policy manual development. In addition, boards can enroll in a policy updating service that keeps them current with changes in laws and management practices.

- *The National School Boards Association* offers school boards help in developing and maintaining up-to-date policy manuals. The Educational Policies Service consists of a reference manual of codified policy documents, a handbook on policy development, and periodicals reporting on policy issues.

Other Sources of Help

Education Commission of the States, 300 Lincoln Tower, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, Colorado 80295. This organization of state government officials interested in education offers a variety of research reports and public policy studies, as well as periodicals of general interest to local school officials. Write for information.

Educational Research Service, 1800 North Kent Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. ERS represents a consortium of national organizations involved in school governance and management. Its services are available to school districts by subscription and include regular research reports on management practices and problems, a monthly bulletin summarizing the research of other agencies, a budget analysis service, on-call information in response to subscriber questions, and a computerized bank of information about successful management practices. Write for information.

National Organization on Legal Problems in Education, 5401 Southwest Seventh Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66606. NOLPE publishes books, briefing papers, and newsletters on current legal problems facing schools and conducts workshops for school officials and attorneys. Write for information.

Appendix E

Statement of Principles and Procedures for Effective Cooperation Between a Board of Education and its Chief Administrator

Introductory Statement

The establishment of policies for the governing of a school district by the Board of Education and the administration of those policies by the Chief Administrator call for a high order of devotion, statesmanship, and integrity. It is of utmost importance for the good of the children in our schools that the Board of Education and the Chief Administrator work in an atmosphere of mutual trust and good will.

The Illinois Association of School Baords and the Illinois Association of School Administrators urge the acceptance of the following principles and procedures to promote effective cooperation in their efforts to face intelligently the problems of their school districts. It is recommended to board members and administrators that they read carefully and keep in mind always these principles and procedures.

It is to be understood that these statements are in no sense to be substitutes for, but rather to be helpful in carrying out, local policies and procedures which each Board of Education should establish and publish for its school district.

Principles Basic to Effective Cooperation

1) The Board of Education will establish such policies for the conduct and administration of the schools as are prescribed by law and such other policies as may seem advisable and have them prepared in such form that all concerned will be aware of them.

2) The Board of Education will select a Chief Administrator who shall be the head of the school system and be directly responsible to the board for the total administration of the school district. The Board will vest in him the necessary authority and provide him with appropriate personnel to carry out such administration.

3) The Board of Education will endeavor to give counsel and advice to the Chief Administrator regarding the administration of the schools as it deems necessary or expedient, remembering always that board members as individuals have no authority, and only

policies voted by the Board have force. The Board will adopt policies only after consulting with the Chief Administrator.

4) The Board of Education will require of the Chief Administrator such periodic reports as the Board deems necessary to keep it properly advised on the administration of the school district. The Chief Administrator must be frank, honest, concise, and complete in reports to the Board of Education. Important school matters requiring Board action should be presented by the Chief Administrator to the Board as required, not in a semi-private way to individual members.

5) The Board of Education will expect from the Chief Administrator recommendations for the welfare of the school district. His role is to provide the educational leadership for the public schools of the community.

6) The Board of Education will require of the Chief Administrator attendance at all Board meetings except at times when his own employment may be under consideration, or by mutual consent he is absent for a reason authorized by the Board.

7) The Board of Education will employ, promote, transfer, suspend or dismiss personnel after consultation and upon recommendation of the Chief Administrator, and will issue all orders affecting employees through the Chief Administrator.

8) The Board of Education will endeavor to develop ways and means of serving the community and of keeping parents, patrons, and taxpayers informed of the school program, with the advice and cooperation of the Chief Administrator as their executive officer and professional advisor.

9) The Board of Education will endeavor thoroughly and constructively to orient new Board members into the work of the Board and the educational program of the schools, with the assistance of the Chief Administrator.

10) In the community, the Board of Education should expect the Chief Administrator to assume his place as a citizen with all the responsibility which the concept of citizenship conveys. He should use his position of leadership to present the cause of pupil education honestly and forthrightly, and to further community activities compatible with and complementary to those of the schools.

11) The Board of Education reserves unto itself all of its legal responsibilities for the operation of a good common school, including the right to reject any and all recommendations and the right to revise its policies, rules and regulations from time to time to meet changing conditions.

12) Under the laws of the State of Illinois, the Board of Education is the final authority on any controversial issue which cannot be resolved through the regularly constituted administrative channels.

13) All meetings and records of the Board shall be open to the public, with an occasional exception when questions of employement or dismissal, or lawsuits, are involved, in which case the Board might vote to sit as a committee of the whole in closed meeting for purpose of informal discussion.[1]

14) The Board of Education and the Chief Administrator shall have as the basic criterion for evaluating any issue, its effect upon the educational welfare of boys and girls.

15) The Board of Education, together with the Chief Administrator, has a moral obligation to provide such leadership and render such service as will give dignity to the teaching profession and the learning process, and as will engender trust and confidence on the part of all citizens in American public education. It is their obligation and responsibility to work together for an increasingly effective program of education for all our people, and, insofar as is required of each, to submerge personal ambition, prejudice, and desires to that end.

Adopted by Illinois Association of School Boards and Illinois Association of School Administrators.

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[1]For a description of subjects that may be discussed in closed meetings, see the IASB booklet, *The Open Meetings Law: Guidelines for School Boards.*

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